

CLAIM AMENDMENTS:

Please amend Claim 1 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A probe for detecting near-field light or irradiating near-field light, comprising:
 - a cantilever having first and second ends, and being supported at the first end by a substrate and having the second end free;
 - a hollow tip formed at the free end of said cantilever, said tip having an end;
 - a microaperture for utilizing near field light formed at the end of said tip; and
 - a groove formed inside said cantilever, said groove comprising a hollow waveguide, providing a space continuous with said tip, and a mirror disposed in said space,wherein the mirror reflects the light entering from the microaperture toward the hollow waveguide or reflects the light transmitted in the hollow waveguide toward said microaperture.
2. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein the waveguide has a V-shaped transversal cross section.

3. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein the waveguide has a trapezoidal transversal cross section.

4. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein the waveguide has a U-shaped transversal cross section.

5. (Original) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein said tip is shaped as a square cone.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Original) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein said cantilever is principally composed of silicon.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein the mirror is a concave mirror.

10.-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) A surface observation apparatus utilizing near field light provided with at least one probe selected from the group consisting of probes according to any one of Claims 1 to 5, 7 and 9.

18. (Previously Presented) An exposure apparatus utilizing near field light provided with at least one probe selected from the group consisting of probes according to any one of Claims 1 to 5, 7 and 9.

19. (Previously Presented) An information processing apparatus utilizing near field light provided with at least one probe selected from the group consisting of probes according to any one of Claims 1 to 5, 7 and 9.

20.-22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) A probe according to Claim 1, wherein the mirror [[is]] has a slanted face.

24. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein a light toward the microaperture reflected by the mirror generates near field light in the vicinity of the microaperture.

25. (Previously Presented) The probe according to Claim 1, wherein a light toward the hollow waveguide reflected by the mirror is a propagating light passing through the microaperture.